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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re U.S. Patent Application
Bernard Paul Joseph THIERS

Examiner: Kevin McDermott

Group Art Unit: 3635

Serial Number: 09/805,234

Attorney Docket: THIE3001/JEK

Filed: March 14, 2001

For: FLOOR COVERING

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

FAX RECEIVED

OCT 03 2003

GROUP 3600

Pursuant to Rule 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.51(b), 1.56, 1.97 and 1.98, this Information Disclosure Statement is submitted in the above-identified patent application. A listing of documents to be published on the face of any patent granted from this application is submitted herewith on Form PTO-1449. A copy of each listed document is submitted herewith except as noted below.

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS OR INFORMATION NOT LISTED ON
ACCOMPANYING FORM PTO-1449 SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION**

Search Report of Austria Patent Office dated July 21, 2003.

**CONCISE STATEMENT OF RELEVANCY
(NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE DOCUMENTS ONLY)**

The relevancy of the documents listed in the Austria Search Report is indicated in the Search Report. Specifically, French patent 2 623 544 and British patent 2 256 023 are considered to be in the "X" category (relevant as to novelty), and Austria patent 005 566 U1 is considered to be in the "A" category (general interest).

British patent 2 256 023 is already of record in this application and a copy thereof is not submitted herewith.

Austria patent 005566 corresponds to U.S. 6,006,486 that is of record in this case, so a copy is not provided herewith.

French patent 2 623 544 discloses wooden panels 10 connected to each other by means of a layer 26. These panels may be provided with beveled edges 22. In case of very soft wood, a protective material 28 (such as PVC) may be provided on top of the panel covering the beveled edges 22. Figure 4 demonstrates that the material 28 is not in actual contact with the bevels 22, 22'.

Spain patent No. 2 168 045 corresponds to U.S. 6,401,415 and U.S. published application No. US 2002/011669A1. The relevancy of the Spanish document is evident from the corresponding U.S. patents, which reveal an indentation or cut-away portion along adjacent panel edges.

Spanish patent No. 1 019 585 discloses a flooring element comprising a plaster board 2, a cardboard substrate 3 and a multi-layer covering 4 in the form of decorative layers. After installation, the bevels 7 at the joints are filled with a product. The imitation joints 8 can be colored in the same color of the product placed in the joints/bevels 7.

Japanese patent application publication No. 8-109734 reveals small bevels at the top edges of tongue and groove connected floor panels.

Japanese published patent application No. 7-180333 (abstract only herewith) discloses a small bevel at the upper corners of adjoining tongue and groove flooring panel joints.

The literature documents collectively disclose that decorative foils have been applied to cut away edges of MDF core decorative laminated panels. Generally, the documents are concerned with covering MDF panel edges that have been shaped or molded.

The publication of Fantoni PLAXIL describes the use of a decorative edging material applied to a bevel edge adjacent a tongue portion of a panel having a tongue and groove edge treatment adapting it to be joined to other panels by the tongue and groove connectors. On page 49 it is described that the edges can be finished with heat transfer foil. The publication "Technical Information - MDF Medium Density Fiberboard" published by the Euro MDF Board describes MDF edges covered by the application of

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dry transfer foil to the molded edge.

The User's Manual published by the Euro MDF Board discloses the application of heat transfer foil to MDF surfaces and edges, including the exposed ends of MDF moldings that are otherwise wrapped.

The publication "Arbeitskreis MDF" describes covering profiled edges of panels with an edge-transfer finish in the form of a transfer edge foil.

STATEMENT OF CUMULATIVE INFORMATION

U.S. 6,401,415 and patent application publication No. US 2002/011669 correspond to Spain 2 168 045.

U.S. 6,006,486 corresponds to Austria 005 566 U1.

STATEMENT REGARDING TRANSLATIONS

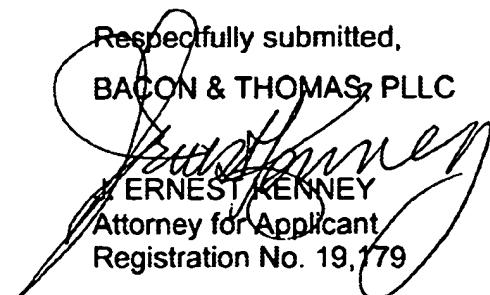
A translation of Japanese patent publication No. 8-109734 is appended to the document.

A translation of the full document of Japanese patent publication No. 7-180333 is not available. An English language abstract appears on the document submitted herewith.

The Examiner is requested to acknowledge consideration of the information provided in this paper in accordance with prescribed procedures.

Any fee required in connection with this Information Disclosure Statement may be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-0200.

Respectfully submitted,
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